Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 00172 091418Z

43
ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 AID-05

SAM-01 SAB-01 /058 W
---------- 105391
R 091322Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBSSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5175
INFO AMEMBSSY AMMAN
AMEMBSSY BEIRUT
AMEMBSSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0172

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS, LE
SUBJECT: PERES AND PRESS ON LEBANESE-SYRIAN RELATIONS

REF:TEL AVIV 0119
1. DURING JANUARY 8 TOUR OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ALONG LEBANESE BORDER, DEFMIN PERES SAID (AS QUOTED BY GOI PRESS BULLETIN)" WE HAVE MADE OUR POSITIN CLEAR IN CASE SYRIAN SOLDIERS SHOULD ENTER LEBANESE TERRITORY". PERES REPORTEDLY ADDED HIS VIEW THT LEBANESE FRONTIER WAS NOW MOST SENSI-TIVE OF ALL ISRAELI BORDERS AND THT TERRORISTS HAD TURNED SOUTHERN LEBANON INTO REGION MOSTACTIVE AGAINST ISRAEL. PERES WAS ACCOMPANIEND ON HIS TOUR OF NORTHERN SETTLEMENTS BY C-OF-S GUR AND O/C NORTHERN COMMAND EITAN.

2. ISRAELI PRESS REACTION TO LEBANESE-SYRAIN SUMMIT, MEANWHILE, SHOWS VARIETY OF VIEWS AT ONE EXTREME, YEDIOT AHARONOT NOTES THAT LEBANON WILL NOW BE RECEIVING WEAPONS FROM ANOTHER ARAB STATE AND FINDS ITS STATEMENTS OF UNWILL-INGNESS TO ACCEPT TROOPS AS " TOO AMBIGIOUS TO BE CONVINCING". YEDITO CONCLUDES THAT THE ARAB CONFRONTATION
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 00172 091418Z

AGAINST ISRAEL IS THUS SPREADING TO LEBANON AND ISRAEL MAY

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

THEREFORE HAVE TO CONSIDER REVISING ITS METHODS OFFIGHTING TERRORISM.

3. CALMER VIEW IS PROJECTED BY MAARIV, WHICH BELIEVES THAT "COMMON SENSE" PREVAILED AT SUMMIT. IT SEES THE COMMUNIQUE AS COMOUFLAGE FOR LEBANESE SUSPICION OF SYRIAN MOTIVESANC CONCLUDES THAT LEBANON HAS UNDERSTOOD ISRAELI WARNINGS.

4. DAVAR ASSUMES WHAT IS PROBABLY A WIDE-SPREAD ATTITUDE. IT CONCLUDES THAT SITUATION IN LEBANON MUST BEWATCHED CLOSELY, SINCE LEBANON SEEM TO HAVE BECOME MORE TOLERANT OF TERRORIST PRESENCE AND SOUTHENR LEBANON IS ALMOST "SOVERIGN DOMAIN OF THE SYRIAN-CONTROLLED SAIQA."

5. COMMENT: PERES STTEMENT ADDS NOTHING NEW TO ISRAELI POSITION, AND WE SUSPECT HI WELL-PUBLICIZED TOUR IN COMPANY OF TOP-RANKING IDF OFICERS WAS DESINGED PRIMARILY TO OFFER VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF GOI CONCEN TO ISRAELI PUBLIC, ESPECIALLY TO RSIDENTS OF NORTHER SETTLEMENTSM MIXED PRESS REACTION PROBBLY REFLECTS ISRAELI UNCERTAINTY RE ACTUAL RESULTS OF ASAD-FRANGIEH TALKS AND AMBIGIOUS NATURE OF THEIR COMMUNIQE.
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